

Peter Schickele

A Garland of Rags for Piano



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I was just as interested as was everyone else when Joshua Rifkin brought out his recording in 1970 of Scott Joplin's piano rags played at the tempos Joplin intended, rather than at the more frantic tempos favored in the 1920's and 30's. But the greatest influence on my own rags was a recording by Joe "Fingers" Carr, featuring many pieces at faster tempos, and even a waltz in ragtime.

The first piece in this collection, entitled "Planetary Motion," is dedicated to Peter van de Kamp, an astronomy professor at Swarthmore College when I was a student there. In the days before VCR's and DVD's, he had a collection of Charlie Chaplin movies, which he would sometimes show for the college community, accompanying the films on piano.

The second number is for my daughter Karla; "Jamaroona" is the name she gave one of her favorite dolls.

I spent all or part of several summers between 1959 and 1964 in Aspen, Colorado, and "Aspen Afternoons" reflects my favorite time of day: the late afternoon, when the golden sunlight shone on the mountains, the buildings, and the dusty roads, many of which were not yet paved. For reasons I can no longer recall, this piece is dedicated to my brother David, whose nickname was Wald.

Spike Jones had a comedy band which flourished in the 1940's and 50's, and his greeting was often "Hello, music lovers." At the age of about nine or ten, I became a passionate fan. The ending of this piece was the City Slickers' sign-off.

When he was very little, my son had a blanket he called Baba, which he cherished until there was hardly anything left to cherish. So the title of this last number is actually a pun.

Some of these rags were composed and played long before being written down; the date at the last double bar is February 2, 1972.



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A Garland of Rags

for Piano

Duration: c. 7'

for Peter van de Kamp

1. Planetary Motion

PETER SCHICKELE

Bright and steady (♩ = c. 168)

mf RH legato

No pedal until the last bar

4

8

for Karla
2. Jamaroona Rag

3

Very fast (♩ = c. 146)

The musical score is written for piano in 2/2 time, marked 'Very fast (♩ = c. 146)'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The first system (measures 1-6) begins with a forte 'f' dynamic. The melody in the treble staff features a series of eighth-note runs and chords, with a fermata over a chord in measure 3. The bass staff provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes and chords. The second system (measures 7-12) continues the melodic and harmonic patterns, with a fermata in measure 10. The third system (measures 13-18) concludes the piece with a final melodic flourish and a sustained chord in the bass.

in memoriam Spike Jones
4. The Music Lover

7

Very fast, swing eighths (♩ = $\overset{\frown}{\underset{\frown}{\text{♩}}}$ $\overset{\frown}{\underset{\frown}{\text{♩}}}$), (♩ = c. 120+)

The first system of music is in 2/2 time and B-flat major. It consists of four measures. The right hand features a complex, fast-moving melody with many beamed eighth notes and triplets, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of chords and single notes. A forte (f) dynamic marking is present in the first measure.

The second system, starting at measure 5, contains two first endings. The first ending (marked '1.') leads to a double bar line, and the second ending (marked '2.') leads to a repeat sign. A 'D.C.' (Da Capo) instruction is placed above the first ending. The melody continues with rapid eighth-note patterns.

The third system, starting at measure 10, includes a 'Play 3 times' instruction above the staff. It features a repeat sign followed by a section to be played three times. The right hand has a melodic line with some grace notes, and the left hand continues with chordal accompaniment.

The fourth system, starting at measure 15, continues the piece with more rapid eighth-note passages in both hands. It concludes with a final chord in the right hand and a sustained bass note in the left hand.

for Matthew
5. Baba Rag

Easy-going, swing eighths ($\text{♪} = \text{♪} \text{♪}$), ($\text{♩} = \text{c. } 160$)

mp

not too short

sim.

4th time to Coda ⊕

1. to §

2. (go on to bridge)

3. (go on to bridge)

p

p

Bridge

2nd time RH 8va sempre

poco

mp

p